DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 160 928 CG 012 873

AUTHOR Welch, Harvey, Jr.; Wickersham, Beverly Horner
TITLE Leisure Exploration Service, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, Illinois.
PUB DATE [75]
NOTE 7p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS College Programs; Environmental Influences; Higher Education; *Human Living; *Leisure Time; *Life Style; Models; *Quality of Life; *Recreational Activities; *Student Personnel Services

ABSTRACT

Future population structures will place heavy emphasis on development of leisure time planning. Leisure time activities and recreation are viewed as an integration of work and leisure for the satisfaction of the individual's lifestyle preferences. An interdisciplinary approach to this issue is presented, with emphasis on heightening personal leisure awareness and facilitating decision-making skills to achieve a sense of leisure satisfaction. The model of services deals directly with the individual in assessing personal leisure needs, and suggests appropriate outlets. (Author/KA)

**********
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
**********

ED160928

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

H Welch

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

LEISURE EXPLORATION SERVICE

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

CARBONDALE, ILLINOIS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

Presenters

Harvey Welch, Jr.
Dean of Student Life

Beverly Horner Wickersham
Dept. of Guidance and
Educational Psychology

As we look toward the future, the probable impact of social forces on the total life style of the individual adds increased meaning to the concept of leisure. Today and in the future it is essential that people develop an open attitude toward leisure whereby choices can be made to:

. . . cope with rapid change and emotional stress by doing nothing, by experiencing relaxation training, or by participating in recreational activities.

. . . find personal fulfillment through skill development, social interest involvement, or perhaps a change in occupation.

. . . maximize one's health through nutrition, rest, exercise, environmental action, and stress reduction.

In view of future leisure trends, the Southern Illinois University Recreation Department, the Guidance and Educational Psychology Department, and the office of Student Life became interested in assisting students to cope with increased leisure challenges through a Leisure Exploration Service (L.E.S.). This service can be described as a helping process which heightens personal awareness and facilitates decision making skills needed to achieve leisure well being. Such a service speaks directly to the individual in attempting to assess one's personal leisure needs and in exploring alternative outlets for these needs.

The concern in this project focuses not only on time and activity, but also the idea of leisure as freedom - freedom to do, or not do, what one wishes, and the attitudes which one holds toward these activities or inactivities.

> By integrating the various time, work, and leisure spheres, one is able to construct several alternative life patterns. The prerequisites for various leisure life styles are conditioned by one's time and work orientation and vice versa. The significance of leisure in a post-industrial era gains relevance when the individual makes of it what is pertinent and meaningful to his personal life rhythm (Murphy, 1975, p. 5).

SG012873

Background

Are most college students really dissatisfied with their current "personal life rhythm"? Many are spending excessive time in their rooms, especially on weekends. Alcoholism, and free time vandalism of student resident dormitories is increasing. A failure of students to attend scheduled programs that they themselves have requested has been noted. The campus counseling center reports that among other problems, many students are apathetic about their free time.

It was proposed that a Leisure Exploration Service (L.E.S.) be initiated on an experimental basis for one year. The program was designed to provide a helping process for heightening personal leisure awareness and attitudes, and to facilitate decision making skills for the use of discretionary time. The Leisure Exploration Service is not totally activity orientated, but rather focuses on student needs in terms of a holistic leisure philosophy. The primary goal of the program is to enhance student development of such a leisure philosophy. In order to achieve this goal, specific objectives for the service are as follows:

1. To facilitate student exploration of personal needs, attitudes, and obstacles toward the use of discretionary time for personal well being.

2. To facilitate the development of decision making skills for self-determination in leisure.

3. To increase student awareness of options available to them through an information delivery system.

4. To serve as a liaison, when appropriate, between student needs and university community opportunities.

Although the emphasis of the proposed Leisure Exploration Service is unique, it is recognized that other service areas on campus also support leisure awareness and skill development. It is for this reason that the Leisure Exploration Service works closely with Student Activities, Recreation and Intramural Sports programs, the University Counseling Center, the Career Counseling Center, University Housing, and the Office of International Students. It is believed that the Recreation Department and the Guidance and Educational Psychology Department, working in cooperation with the Student Life Office provide a strong interdisciplinary approach to Leisure Exploration. The program delivers effective services to all campus students while expanding the educational opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students with majors in each of the above departments. Starting with a modest budget which included funding of one graduate assistant and one undergraduate assistant, the staff has grown to 4 graduate supervisors and 16 undergraduate paraprofessional counselors.

These paraprofessionals were required to complete 22 hours of training in basic communication techniques and attending skills plus a series of readings in leisure counseling.

The Program

Figure 1 outlines the organization of L.E.S. operations. In order to contact students and introduce them to L.E.S.'s services, the intake function was divided into two phases: "office intake" and "active outreach."

In the "office intake" phase it is the student who initiates contact. To facilitate this contact L.E.S. maintains regular office hours. This is further facilitated by advertisements in the student newspapers, posters on bulletin boards in the Student Center and dormitories, and utilization of available community media.

Many students contact L.E.S. requesting activity information. In order to provide students with a wide variety of information service a Resource Guide for Southern Illinois University has been compiled which lists available activity possibilities on campus and in the surrounding region. Close contact is maintained with the university community recreation services, student clubs, newspapers, etc in order to provide a continually updated office file of area activities.

If students contacting L.E.S. are not sure about their leisure interests the staff will take time to explore a wide variety of activities with them, by actively listening to the verbal and non-verbal cues of the student, utilizing the full range of the paraprofessional skills developed in staff training.

Unfortunately those students most in need of L.E.S.'s services rarely initiate contact with the office. Therefore, an "active outreach" program consisting of leisure awareness workshops has been designed. In these workshops conducted by undergraduate paraprofessional counselors and supervised by graduate student counselors, topics such as leisure value clarification, decision making, and time management are discussed. The goal is to intensify personal awareness of the importance leisure can play in one's lifestyle and to assist in developing those skills needed to activate new, more satisfying leisure patterns. The format consists of 12 to 14 students meeting with a paraprofessional counselor for 3, two-hour meetings structured by a series of group exercises. The L.E.S. staff is presently involved in providing workshops with particular emphasis on the following groups: freshmen and new students to the area, dormitory residents, foreign students, married couples, and retiring university Civil Service personnel. However, the workshops are not limited to these groups. Our staff provides workshops for any interested students, faculty or university organizations.

These workshops, which are conducted in a variety of campus settings, have been very successful in reaching students. Over 600 students have participated in these programs, and many have requested further information about recreation activities or more specialized leisure exploration groups. By taking the program to the students, L.E.S. is now reaching individuals who are bored and apathetic about their leisure lifestyle.

## Future Plans

The majority of the programs initiated thus far will be continued at Southern Illinois University. However, the problem still exists in determining where the service belongs in the organizational structure of the university. There are several alternatives in this regard. Because the program includes not only leisure interests, but also the total life-style, one logical conclusion would be to integrate L.E.S. with the Career Counseling Center, thus providing vocational as well as avocational counseling. Another alternative would be to integrate L.E.S. with the Student Government Programming Activity. Presently L.E.S. is housed in and affiliated with the Office of Student Life, with faculty supervision from the Recreation Department and the Guidance and Educational Psychology Department. If the program remains as currently structured, a strong emphasis must be continually maintained to coordinate L.E.S. with other campus organizations, not only to avoid duplication of effort, but also as a means of cross-referral among organizations.

## SUMMARY

The emphasis of the service has evolved from that of simple information referral to active promotion of increased leisure awareness. These results are most encouraging. Not only is L.E.S. helping meet student activity needs, but also is promoting the importance of personal leisure lifestyling. Increasing free time and material abundance in modern industrial societies make leisure one of the important social challenges of our era. Helping young citizens develop personal standards and strategies for the wise use of their leisure is one of the most important functions of an educator. The wise use of leisure time is one goal of a true liberal education, and L.E.S. is striving to help achieve this goal. We are currently developing our budget to sponsor this program for another year. If our evaluations remain as positive next year we will begin the processes to institutionalize the program.

## References

Murphy, J., Recreation and Leisure Service, Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Company Publishers, 1975.

L. E. S. FLOW CHART

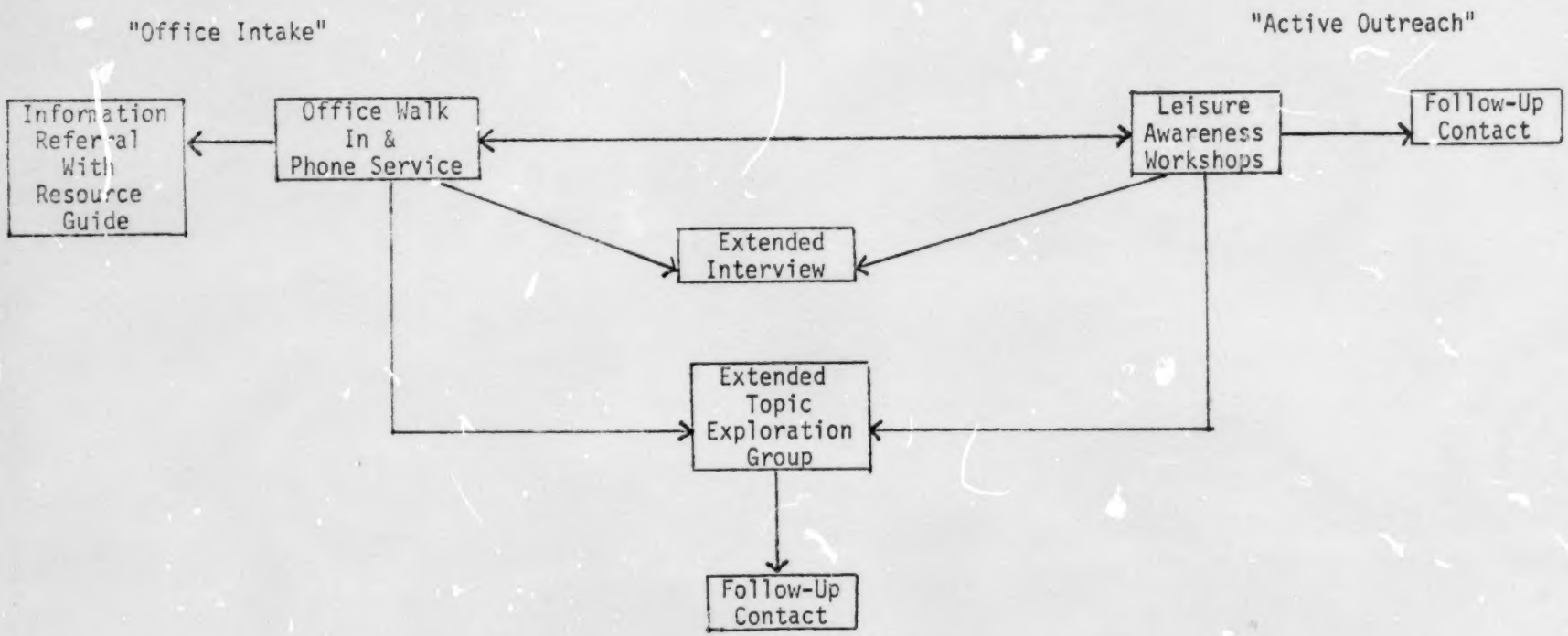


Figure 1